

# History 6684

## Historiography

### Fall 2008

Instructor: Dr. Dan Williams  
Office Hours: TLC 3225  
T, Th, 11:00-12:30  
Wed., 10-12, 1-4  
(and by appointment)

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Class Location:  
TLC 3205  
Thurs., 5:30-8:00pm

#### **Description:**

As a required course for students pursuing an M.A. in history, HIST 6684 offers a comprehensive survey of recent historiographical trends – that is, approaches to the writing of history. The course begins with a discussion of the rise of “scientific” history in the early nineteenth century, and then quickly moves to the twentieth century with discussions of the *Annales* school, Marxist and progressive history, cliometrics, the new cultural history, and historical analysis of gender, race, religion, and the environment. The course will focus on the relevance of these approaches for current historical writing in the twenty-first century.

This course will be taught as a seminar, which means that class sessions will consist of discussions of the assigned readings. Students will have the opportunity to interact with their colleagues, explore new points of view, ask questions, and present their own interpretations of the readings as they seek to gain an understanding of the history of their craft and the methodology necessary to produce their own historical scholarship.

#### **Learning outcomes:**

This class will give students an understanding of what it means to write history. Students will explore the major approaches to historical writing over the past century, and will acquire an understanding of current trends in historical writing. By analyzing and debating competing approaches to historical knowledge, they will gain the information that they need to evaluate their own approach to the past. By gaining an understanding of the way in which the writing of history has evolved over the past few decades, they will be able to assess the historiography of their own area of research, a crucial first step in the process of producing a master’s thesis or future graduate seminar papers.

**Assessment:**

Students' final grades will be determined as follows:

|                           |     |
|---------------------------|-----|
| Class participation       | 25% |
| Midterm exam              | 20% |
| Historiography paper      | 25% |
| Supplementary assignments | 10% |
| Final exam                | 20% |

There will be no opportunity for extra-credit assignments in this course.

**Grading Methodology:** This university does not use a plus / minus grading system, but during the course of the semester, I will use plus / minus grades, as well as split-letter grades (e.g., an A- / B+), in order to evaluate students' written work with precision. In computing final course grades, I convert all grades into numeric scores according to the following system:

A = 95

A/A- = 94

A- = 92

A-/B+ = 90

B+ = 88

B+/B = 87

B = 85

B/B- = 84

B- = 82

B-/C+ = 80

(A similar pattern is used for grades in the C-range).

In computing final course grades, a grade average of 89.5 or higher converts to a course grade of A, a grade average between 79.5 and 89.49 converts to a course grade of B, and a grade average between 69.5 and 79.49 converts to a course grade of C.

A-range grades, including the grade of A-/B+, are reserved for work that is of exceptional quality. In order to receive an A-range grade on an essay assignment, a student's essay must show evidence of original thinking and a thorough understanding of the relevant sources on the topic, as well as good writing technique. Papers that receive a grade of 90 or above must be cogent and persuasive in their argumentation, and they must be well written and tightly organized around a strong thesis. In short, a paper that receives an A-range grade not only meets the basic requirements for the assignment, but also demonstrates that a student has mastered the interpretative, analytical, and writing skills expected for a course at this level.

B-range grades are given to essays that demonstrate a student's accurate understanding of the material, adequate use of the assigned documents, and competence in writing. They rarely contain the sophisticated analysis required for an A-range essay, but they meet the requirements and expectations for the assignment.

C-range grades are given to essays that contain factual inaccuracies, errors in interpretation, inadequate use of the assigned documents, or poor writing technique, even though they usually meet most of the basic requirements for the assignment.

Failing grades are assigned to work that does not meet the requirements and expectations for the assignment.

**Take-home exams (midterm and final):** At two points in the semester – October 2 and November 20 – I will give you an essay question related to broad themes that are covered in the class readings. You will then have two weeks to write a 6-8 page response to the midterm exam question, and three weeks to write a response to the final exam question.

**Historiography paper and supplementary assignments:** You will be expected to write a 12-15 page historiographical analysis of a topic of your choice. This historiography paper is due on November 20, but supplementary assignments related to this paper are due on September 11, September 25, and December 4. Please see the guidelines for this assignment for additional details.

Papers that are turned in after the assigned date will be marked down 1/3 of a letter grade for each day they are overdue.

It should go without saying that all papers that you write must be your own work, and that any students who are caught plagiarizing another student's work, a paper from a web site, a textbook, or any other source will automatically fail this course and may be subject to further disciplinary action. Plagiarism is a serious offense that will not be tolerated.

All of your written work for this class must be original; you are not allowed to submit essays that you have written for other courses or that you have completed prior to this semester.

**Class participation:** Since class sessions in this seminar course will consist almost entirely of class discussion, your participation in those discussions is crucial to the success of this course. It is imperative that you come to class prepared to talk about the assigned reading each week. I will determine your class participation grade at the end of the semester based on my perception of your level of preparedness for each class session, your willingness to participate in the discussion, and the perceptiveness of the comments that you make throughout the duration of this course. I understand that some students may be more inclined than others to speak up in class, but I hope to create an environment that will allow everyone, regardless of their personality or background, to feel comfortable sharing their thoughts on the readings. If you find yourself reluctant to join in the conversation for any reason, or if you feel that your class participation level does not adequately reflect your knowledge of the material and preparation for class, I would encourage you to meet with me early in the semester to discuss strategies that will enable you to succeed in earning a class participation grade that accurately reflects your work.

**Assigned readings:** I did not place an order at the university bookstore for the assigned monographs for this course, but you can easily order these books online. I have listed the publication information for every assigned text so that you can order the correct editions. With only two exceptions, all of the assigned books are available in paperback. Many of these books are also available for 24-hour loan at the UWG library reserves desk. A list of books that are available for short-term loan is posted on the library's course reserve page for this class.

The assigned journal articles are available through the JSTOR or EBSCOhost databases, which you can access through the university library's website. The photocopied sections of book chapters and other assigned readings are available through the university library's online course reserves. To access those course reserves, go to the UWG library website and click on "course reserves." The course reserves page for this class is password protected, so you will need to get the password for the class from me.

**Class communication:** I may send out periodic email communiqués to students in this course, so please check your UWG email account regularly. The university administration has stipulated that all email communication between faculty and students should take place on UWG email accounts, so please use your UWG email account for all electronic communications that you send me.

University policy also prevents me from disclosing grades over email, so if you would like to discuss your grade on any assignment in the class, please set up an appointment to meet with me in my office. Please do not email me with a request for your grades, since I am not allowed to email that information to you.

To protect students' privacy rights, I will not return graded papers to any third party (e.g., a student's friend or relative who asks to pick up a student's work on that person's behalf) unless a student gives me permission in writing (e.g., an email) to do so. There are occasions when I must disclose a student's grade to university administrators or other history department faculty (e.g., the department chair, students' advisors, or the graduate studies coordinator), but in all other cases, I will make every effort to maintain the confidentiality of students' grades.

I would like to do whatever I can to help you succeed in this course. Please do not hesitate to contact me if you have a question about any subject pertaining to this class. I make it a priority to respond promptly to emails from students, and I am happy to talk with students during my office hours, so please feel free to stop by my office anytime that you want to discuss your concerns about this course. I believe that this will be an excellent semester, and I'm pleased to welcome you to this class.

**Assigned texts:**

You will need to obtain copies of the following books. The prices listed are for new copies from amazon.com, but you may be able to obtain some of these books at lower prices by buying used copies through online book dealers.

David L. Chappell, *A Stone of Hope: Prophetic Religion and the Death of Jim Crow* (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 2004). Paper. ISBN: 978-0807856604. \$18.95.

William Cronon, *Changes in the Land: Indians, Colonists, and the Ecology of New England*, 2<sup>nd</sup> ed. (New York: Hill and Wang, 2003). Paper. ISBN: 978-0809016341. \$13.50.

Robert Darnton, *The Great Cat Massacre: And Other Episodes in French Cultural History* (New York: Basic Books, 1984). Paper. ISBN: 978-0394729275. \$10.17.

Robert William Fogel and Stanley L. Engerman, *Time on the Cross: The Economics of American Negro Slavery*, 2<sup>nd</sup> ed. (New York: W.W. Norton, 1989). Paper. ISBN: 978-0393312188. \$12.21.

Eugene Genovese, *Roll, Jordan, Roll: The World the Slaves Made* (New York: Vintage Books, 1974). Paper. ISBN: 978-0394716527. \$13.60.

Anthony Grafton, *The Footnote: A Curious History* (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 1997). Paper. ISBN: 978-0674307605. \$14.45.

Peter Charles Hoffer, *Past Imperfect* (New York: Public Affairs, 2004). Paper. ISBN: 978-1586484453. \$12.21.

Lynn Hunt, ed., *The New Cultural History* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1989). Paper. ISBN: 978-0520064294. \$19.76.

George G. Iggers, *Historiography in the Twentieth Century: From Scientific Objectivity to Postmodern Challenge*, 2<sup>nd</sup> ed. (Hanover, NH: Wesleyan University Press, 2005). (The first edition of this book will also be acceptable). Paper. ISBN: 978-0819567666. \$17.96.

Kevin M. Kruse, *White Flight: Atlanta and the Making of Modern Conservatism* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 2005). Paper. ISBN: 978-0691133867. \$17.06.

Emmanuel Le Roy Ladurie, *Montaillou: The Promised Land of Error* (New York: Vintage Books, 1978). Paper. ISBN: 978-0807615980. \$13.57.

T.J. Jackson Lears, *No Place of Grace: Antimodernism and the Transformation of American Culture, 1880-1920* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1981). Paper. ISBN: 978-0226469706. \$31.50.

Elaine Tyler May, *Homeward Bound: American Families in the Cold War Era*, 2<sup>nd</sup> ed. (New York: Basic Books, 1999). Paper. ISBN: 978-0465030552. \$19.80.

Peter Novick, *That Noble Dream: the "Objectivity Question" and the American Historical Profession* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1988). Paper. ISBN: 978-0521357456. \$26.99.

Gordon S. Wood, *The Purpose of the Past: Reflections on the Uses of History* (New York: Penguin Press, 2008). HB. ISBN: 978-1594201547. \$17.13.

**Class schedule:**

- 8/21 Introduction: What do historians do?
- 8/28 History before and after Ranke  
 George G. Iggers, *Historiography in the Twentieth Century: From Scientific Objectivity to Postmodern Challenge* (Hanover, NH: Wesleyan University Press, 1997), 1-47.  
 Wilhelm von Humboldt, "On the Historian's Task" (1821), in *History and Theory*, 6 (1967): 57-71 (JSTOR).  
 Anthony Grafton, *The Footnote: A Curious History* (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 1997).
- 9/4 The Annales school  
 Fernand Braudel, "Personal Testimony," *J. of Modern History*, 44 (1972): 448-467 (JSTOR).  
 H.R. Trevor-Roper, "Fernand Braudel, the *Annales*, and the Mediterranean," *J. of Modern History*, 44 (1972): 468-479 (JSTOR).  
 Iggers, 51-64.  
 Emmanuel Le Roy Ladurie, *Montaillou: The Promised Land of Error* (New York: Vintage Books, 1978).
- 9/11 Environmental history  
 William Cronon, *Changes in the Land: Indians, Colonists, and the Ecology of New England*, 2<sup>nd</sup> ed. (New York: Hill and Wang, 2003).  
**Historiography paper topic and supplementary topic essay due.**
- 9/18 Social class: Progressive history and Marxism  
 John Burrows, *A History of Histories* (New York: Alfred A. Knopf, 2008), 455-462 (online course reserves).  
 Iggers, 78-94.  
 Eugene Genovese, *Roll, Jordan, Roll: The World the Slaves Made* (New York: Vintage Books, 1974), 3-324.
- 9/25 The new social history and history from below  
 Laurence Veysey, "The 'New' Social History in the Context of American Historical Writing," *Reviews in American History*, 7 (1979): 1-12 (JSTOR).  
 Roger Fletcher, "History from Below Comes to Germany: The New History Movement in the Federal Republic of Germany," *J. of Modern History*, 60 (1988): 557-568.  
 Lizabeth Cohen, "Encountering Mass Culture at the Grassroots: The Experience of Chicago Workers in the 1920s," *American Quarterly*, 41 (1989): 6-33 (JSTOR).  
 Reviews of Lizabeth Cohen's *Making a New Deal: Industrial Workers in Chicago, 1919-1939* (search JSTOR).

**Bibliography for historiography paper due.**

- 10/2 Cliometrics  
 Naomi R. Lamoreaux, "Economic History and the Cliometric Revolution," in *Imagined Histories: American Historians Interpret the Past*, ed. Anthony Molho and Gordon S. Wood (Princeton University Press, 1998), 59-84 (online course reserves).  
 Robert William Fogel and Stanley L. Engerman, *Time on the Cross: The Economics of American Negro Slavery*, 2<sup>nd</sup> ed. (New York: W.W. Norton, 1989).  
 Oscar Handlin, "How to Count a Number," in Handlin, *Truth in History* (Cambridge, MA: Belknap Press, 1979), 194-226 (online course reserves).  
 Thomas L. Haskell, *Objectivity is not Neutrality: Explanatory Schemes in History* (Baltimore: Johns Hopkins University Press, 2000), 31-56 (online course reserves).
- 10/9 No class (instructor at a conference)
- 10/16 Postmodernism, the new anthropology, and the new cultural history  
 Hayden White, "Introduction: Historical Fiction, Fictional History, and Historical Reality," *Rethinking History*, 9 (2005): 147-157 (EBSCOhost Academic Search Complete).  
 Lynn Hunt, ed., *The New Cultural History* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1989), 1-128.  
 Iggers, 97-147.  
 Robert Darnton, *The Great Cat Massacre: And Other Episodes in French Cultural History* (New York: Basic Books, 1984), 1-106.  
**Midterm exam essay due.**
- 10/23 A new form of intellectual history  
 Perry Miller, "'Preparation for Salvation' in Seventeenth-Century New England," *J. of the History of Ideas*, 4 (1943): 253-286.  
 T.J. Jackson Lears, *No Place of Grace: Antimodernism and the Transformation of American Culture, 1880-1920* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1981).
- 10/30 Gender history  
 Joan W. Scott, "Gender: A Useful Category of Historical Analysis," *American Historical Review*, 91 (1986): 1053-1075 (JSTOR).  
 Jacquelyn Dowd Hall, "Disorderly Women: Gender and Labor Militancy in the Appalachian South," *J. of American History*, 73 (1986): 354-382 (JSTOR).  
 Elaine Tyler May, *Homeward Bound: American Families in the Cold War Era*, 2<sup>nd</sup> ed. (New York: Basic Books, 1999).
- 11/6 Race and the history of African Americans  
 Ulrich B. Phillips, "The Economic Cost of Slaveholding in the Cotton Belt," *Political Science Quarterly*, 20 (1905): 257-275 (JSTOR).

- Kenneth M. Stamp, "The Historian and Southern Negro Slavery," *American Historical Review*, 57 (1952): 613-624 (JSTOR).
- John W. Blassingame, "Before the Ghetto: The Making of the Black Community in Savannah, Georgia, 1865-1880," *J. of Social History*, 6 (1973): 463-488 (JSTOR).
- Jacqueline Jones, "Race and Gender in Modern America," in *The Challenge of American History*, ed. Louis P. Masur (Baltimore: Johns Hopkins University Press, 1999), pp. 220-238 (online course reserves).
- John Hope Franklin, "On the Evolution of Scholarship in Afro-American History," in *The State of Afro-American History: Past, Present, and Future*, ed. Darlene Clark Hine (Baton Rouge: Louisiana State University Press, 1986), 13-22 (online course reserves).
- Richard H. King, "Recasting African American History," *Slavery and Abolition*, 27 (2006): 133-138 (EBSCOhost Academic Search Complete).
- Pero Gaglo Dagbovie, "Exploring a Century of Historical Scholarship on Booker T. Washington," *J. of African American History*, 92 (2007): 239-264.
- James D. Anderson, "How We Learn about Race through History," in *Learning History in America: Schools, Cultures, and Politics*, ed. Lloyd Kramer et al. (Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 1994), 87-106 (online course reserves).
- Reviews of Matthew Frye Jacobson, *Whiteness of a Different Color* (Harvard University Press, 1998) (search JSTOR).
- 11/13 Religion
- Jon Butler, "Jack-in-the-Box Faith: The Religion Problem in Modern American History," *Journal of American History*, 90 (March 2004): 1357-1378 (EBSCOhost Academic Search Complete).
- Paul Boyer, "The Chameleon with Nine Lives: American Religion in the Twentieth Century," in *Perspectives on Modern America: Making Sense of the Twentieth Century*, ed. Harvard Sitkoff (New York: Oxford University Press, 2001), 247-274 (online course reserves).
- Jan Shippo, "Richard Lyman Bushman, the Story of Joseph Smith and Mormonism, and the New Mormon History," *J. of American History*, 94 (2007): 498-516.
- Richard Lyman Bushman, "What's New in Mormon History: A Response to Jan Shippo," *J. of American History*, 94 (2007): 517-521.
- David L. Chappell, *A Stone of Hope: Prophetic Religion and the Death of Jim Crow* (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 2004).
- 11/20 Bias, objectivity, and the uses of history
- E.P. Thompson, "Agenda for Radical History," *Critical Inquiry*, 21 (1995): 299-304 (JSTOR).
- John Hope Franklin, "The Historian and Public Policy," *The History Teacher*, 11 (1978): 377-391 (JSTOR).
- Peter Novick, *That Noble Dream: the "Objectivity Question" and the American Historical Profession* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1988), 415-629.

Gordon S. Wood, *The Purpose of the Past: Reflections on the Uses of History* (New York: Penguin Press, 2008), 62-72, 264-308.

Peter Charles Hoffer, *Past Imperfect* (New York: Public Affairs, 2004), 13-171.

**Historiography paper due.**

11/27 No class (Thanksgiving break)

12/4 Contemporary Approaches

Wood, *The Purpose of the Past*, 40-61, 110-145.

Adam Hochschild, "Practicing History without a License," *Historically Speaking*,

9 (March / April 2008): 2-5 [[http://64.233.167.104/search?q=cache:2mcZD1-570wJ:www.bu.edu/historic/\\_hs\\_pdfs/Hochschild\\_Mar\\_Ap\\_2008.pdf+%22do+you+need+a+license+to+practice+history%22&hl=en&ct=clnk&cd=1&gl=us](http://64.233.167.104/search?q=cache:2mcZD1-570wJ:www.bu.edu/historic/_hs_pdfs/Hochschild_Mar_Ap_2008.pdf+%22do+you+need+a+license+to+practice+history%22&hl=en&ct=clnk&cd=1&gl=us)].

Kevin M. Kruse, *White Flight: Atlanta and the Making of Modern Conservatism* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 2005).

**Statistical review of current historical literature due.**

12/11 **Final exam essay due.**